IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 4, line 16:

The present invention presents an alternative way of making a elastomeric cuff area, such as a waistband, by temporarily narrowing, or necking, one dimension of one or more of the ~~diaper~~ components of ~~the~~ a precursor garment, or web of precursor ~~garment~~garments (such as when the garments are made in a continuous line, sometimes called a "conversion line," as known to those in the art) ~~webs~~, and attaching an elastomer, whether stretched or unstretched, to the cuff area of the necked precursor garment ~~web~~. That is, the operations of the methods of the present invention will be practiced on any component or combination of components which make up the garment as it is being constructed before the garment is considered to be a commercially ready end item. When the narrowing force, which may be applied in any direction necessary to neck the garment components, is removed, the necked garment component or components will relax and expand, or may be physically caused to expand, except where the elastomer was attached, thus forming a desirable narrowed, and substantially flat, elastomeric cuff area having expandable dimension and elastic tension, and providing an efficient seal against the skin of the wearer. In other embodiments, garment openings such as sleeve or leg cuffs, or necklines, may benefit from similar elasticizing. The margins of any garment opening can be collectively referred to as "cuffs" or "cuff areas".

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 6, line 12:

For example, the diaper backsheet, or outer cover; and topsheet, or bodyside liner; or both, may be necked as separate webs, or joined webs, during assembly into the precursor diaper in the diaper making process i.e., converting the components into a finished diaper, i.e., garment; on a continuous line, i.e., on the equipment for assembling the components into a garment, known sometimes in the art as a "conversion line." A necked backsheet laminate according to one aspect of the present invention will generally remain flat in its extended position. An untensed elastomeric may then be applied to the necked and flat area resulting in an ungathered elasticized waistband or leg elastic area providing an efficacious and comfortable seal area against the body of the wearer.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 7, line 9:

In another alternative, an unstretched elastomer can be applied to the ~~regular~~ otherwise completed diaper assembly and the assembly with the elastomer thereon stretched to neck a cuff area. Heating the elastomer to a high enough temperature while it is necked will cause the elastomer to set at its narrowed width to form the flat cuff area. This method and the second method above could also be used with a thermoset elastomer where the elastomeric pre-cursor is placed on the necked, or to-be-necked, waistband area and then cross-linked. These three processes might be used individually or in combination with each other or with the known pre-stretched elastomer process to make excellent waistbands.

Please substitute the following paragraphs for the paragraphs beginning on Page 8, line 7 and ending at Page 8, line 16:

Fig. 2 illustrates a beginning manufacturing sequence of disposable diapers according to the present invention with the longitudinal direction of the diapers being in the ~~Machine Direction~~ machine direction for ease of necking the desired material webs.

Fig. 3 illustrates a middle manufacturing sequence of disposable diapers according to the present invention with the longitudinal direction of the diapers being in the ~~Machine Direction~~ machine direction for ease of necking the desired material webs.

Fig. 4 illustrates an ending manufacturing sequence including the individuation of disposable diapers from the precursor garment assemblage according to the present invention with the longitudinal direction of the diapers being in the ~~Machine Direction~~ machine direction for ease of necking the desired material webs.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 11, line 17:

"Precursor" as used herein means those components, materials, assemblies, or the like which are used or exist on a continuous or conversion line for assembling the components into a garment in the making of a finished ~~diaper~~ garment before its completion as a commercially ready product.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 19, line 6:

Suitable non-elastic neckable materials for the present invention include nonwoven webs, woven materials and knitted materials such as those described in the above-mentioned U.S. Patent No. 4,965,122. Nonwoven fabrics or webs have been formed from many processes, for example, bonded carded web processes, meltblowing processes and spunbonding processes. The non-elastic neckable material is preferably formed from at least one member selected from fibers and filaments of inelastic polymers. Such polymers include polyesters, for example, polyethylene terephthalate; polyolefins, for example, polyethylene and polypropylene; polyamides, for example, nylon 6 and nylon 66. These fibers or filaments are used alone or in a mixture of two or more thereof. Suitable fibers for forming the neckable material include natural and synthetic fibers as well as bicomponent, multi-component, and shaped polymer fibers. Many polyolefins are available for fiber production according to the present invention, for example, fiber forming polypropylenes include Exxon Chemical Company's Escorene® PD 3445 polypropylene and Himont Chemical Company's PF-304. Polyethylenes such as Dow Chemical's ~~ASPUN~~Aspun® 6811A linear low density polyethylene, 2553 LLDPE and 25355 and 12350 high density polyethylene are also suitable polymers. The nonwoven web layer may be bonded to impart a discrete bond pattern with a prescribed bond surface area. If too much bond area is present on the neckable material, it will break before it necks. If there is not enough bond area, then the neckable material will pull apart. Typically, the percent bonding area useful in the present invention ranges from around five percent to around forty percent of the area of the neckable material. Alternative necked laminate materials that could be used to provide the backsheet 30 of the different aspects of the present invention are described in U.S. Patent Application No. 09/460,490

filed December 14, 1999 and entitled "BREATHABLE LAMINATE PERMANENTLY CONFORMABLE TO THE CONTOURS OF A WEARER".

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 21, line 12:

The topsheet 32 may be made from any suitable neckable materials compatible with the backsheet 30. Suitable materials for use with the present invention may include nonwoven webs, woven materials and knitted materials. Such webs can include one or more fabric layers. Nonwoven fabrics or webs have been formed from many processes, for example, bonded carded web processes, meltblowing processes and spunbonding processes. For example, a non-elastic neckable material may be formed from at least one member selected from fibers and filaments of inelastic polymers. Such polymers include polyesters, for example, polyethylene terephthalate, polyolefins, for example, polyethylene and polypropylene, polyamides, for example, nylon 6 and nylon 66. These fibers or filaments are used alone or in a mixture of two or more thereof. Suitable fibers for forming the neckable material include natural and synthetic fibers as well as bicomponent, multi-component, and shaped polymer fibers. Many polyolefins are available for fiber production according to the present invention, for example, fiber forming polypropylenes include Exxon Chemical Company's Escorene® PD 3445 polypropylene and Himont Chemical Company's PF-304. Polyethylenes such as Dow Chemical's ~~ASPUN~~Aspun® 6811A linear low density polyethylene, 2553 LLDPE and 25355 and 12350 high density polyethylene are also suitable polymers. The nonwoven web layer may be bonded to impart a discrete bond pattern with a prescribed bond surface area. If too much bond area is present on the neckable material, it will break before it necks. If there is not enough bond area, then the neckable material will

pull apart. Typically, the percent bonding area useful in the present invention ranges from around 5 percent to around 40 percent of the area of the neckable material. For example, a particularly suitable material for the topsheet 32 is a necked spunbond web of polypropylene fibers having a basis weight of from about 5 to about 30 gsm. Such a web may be necked up to about 80 percent.

Please add the following paragraph beginning on Page 27, line 18:

In certain embodiments it is desirable that the cuff areas made according to the present invention be expandable by 25% of their original dimensions or expandable by 50% of their original dimensions in at least one axis.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 28, line 5:

With reference to Figs. 2-4, a method for constructing an absorbent article such as a disposable diaper according to the present invention may include the steps of constructing a web of precursor ~~garment web~~ garments, i.e. diapers, and individuating the diapers therefrom as described below and as illustrated in Figs. 2-4.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 28, line 17:

In Step 3 a stretched leg elastic members 36, e.g., composed of four ~~LYCRA~~ Lycra® elastomeric material strands 37 for each leg of, e.g., Lycra XA Spandex 740 DTEXZ T151 dull (/T-127) from E.I. DuPont de Nemours and Co., of Wilmington, Delaware, and

adhesively laminated to a carrier sheet 39, e.g., K-T Slit and Spooled 0.67 mil ALE Carrier Sheet from K. T. Industries Inc., of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, are applied to the top of backsheet material web 30.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 29, line 17:

Referencing Fig. 3, in Step 7 a surge management layer 44 e.g., a ~~Through Air Bonded Carded Web~~ through air bonded carded web nonwoven surge composite for the rapid uptake and channeling of liquids, is located operatively adjacent to the liquid retention structure 34. An adhesive 52, e.g., Disposamelt 34-5611, is applied to the top surface 56 of the surge management layer 44.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 30, line 7

In Step 9 the provided side panels 42 having a fastening means 40, e.g., hook material such as VELCRO 851 hook, from Velcro USA Inc. of Manchester, NH, and carrier sheet 58, e.g., 1.25 osy spunbond-meltblown-spunbond, and an elastic member 60, e.g., ~~Necked Bonded~~ necked bonded laminate, such as taught in U.S. Patents 4,981,747 and 5,336,545; may them be adhesively or ultrasonically laminated, or both, to the precursor garment web.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 30, line 19:

Referencing Fig. 4, in Step 11 waist elastics 38, e.g., a ~~Necked Bonded~~ necked bonded laminate may then be applied to the precursor garment web extending across the waistband region of the precursor garments. Alternatively, the waist elastics 38 may be tensioned and then applied to the precursor garment web. Leg hole cut outs on the lateral margins of the precursor diaper will be seen as introduced in this step.

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph beginning on Page 31, line 5:

In Step 13, the resultant diaper 20 can then be folded if desired (not shown). Over time the intermediate section 26, or non waistband area of the diaper, which is not held by the waist elastics 38, ~~an~~ can expand in the lateral direction 50 as it contracts in the longitudinal direction 48, thus laterally narrowing the waistband area relative to the remaining intermediate area 26 of the diaper 20.